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ABSTRACT

Included in this report are the questions that were asked of math and reading teachers, generalists, aides, and principals during the course of the evaluation, general observations made by the evaluator, and a discussion of observations and recommendations made by both the Title I staff and the evaluator. Each discussion focuses on the respective responsibilities of the Title I staff members, their effectiveness in implementing program guidelines, and the impact of the program on student achievement. General conclusions drawn indicate that the program guidelines were generally implemented, that the best programs had strong cluster teachers working in close coordination with the building principals, and that the program is functioning more smoothly and effectively than in the past. (EB)

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Elementary School Title I Comprehensive Reading and Math Evaluation Report 1976-1977

by

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Elementary School Title I Comprehensive

Reading and Math Evaluation Report

The discussion of the Elementary School Comprehensive Reading and Math Programs is organized around a set of questions. These questions were taken from the description of various personnel provided in the Title I proposal. These questions are designed to serve the purpose in the Provus Discrepancy of validating whether or not the guidelines as stated in the proposal are being met. Following each set of observations, recommendations follow. These recommendations come from both the Title I staff and the evaluator. Following each recommendation section is a set of general observations which the evaluator has included about each of the components. Following are the questions that were asked of each component:

A. Cluster Teacher

1. How did you select the children for your program?
2. When more children were eligible than there were staff available, how did you select those to participate?
3. When do you meet your own pupils for instructional purposes?
4. Approximately how many students do you service instructionally?
5. What percent of the children in your program fall in each stanine?
6. How many children are receiving both reading and math services?
7. How effective do you feel you have been in your job?
8. How cooperative are the regular classroom teachers?
9. What has handicapped your effectiveness?

10. After pupils are selected, what diagnostic procedures do you use to determine the instructional program?

11. Who administers these diagnostic tests?

12. Are the children receiving a regular developmental program (reading and math) in addition to the Title I services?

13. What activities do you provide in the non-teaching side of your job?

14. What assistance do you receive from the supervisors?

15. In what way does the Generalist contribute to your program?

16. How active has the PAC in your school been? What efforts have been made to include parents?

17. Are parents active in your reading and math program?

18. Do you feel that you have enough supplies and materials?

19. What recommendations do you have for the program in general and for your role specifically?

B. Reading and Math Teachers

1. Where is your instructional program implemented?

2. How long is your average reading group?

3. How frequently do you meet with your pupils per week?

4. Of this time, approximately how much is spent in reading skills development _____ math _____ oral or silent reading _____

5. Approximately how long do you have each day for a planning program?

6. How many students are in your average reading group_____? math group _____?

7. How many students do you see totally during the day _____?

8. How frequently do you meet with classroom teachers to confer on student program material, etc.?

9. What assistance does the Cluster Teacher provide?

10. How helpful and knowledgeable are the aides?

11. What type of inservices have you had? How helpful have they been?

12. What services do the supervisors provide?

13. Do you have adequate supplies and materials?

14. What recommendations would you make for the program in general and for your job specifically?

C. Generalist

1. Describe what you feel to be the major aspects of your job.

2. How many children do you see and in what manner?

3. How effective do you feel you have been in your job?

4. What recommendations would you make for the program in general and for your job specifically?

D. Aides

1. What exactly do you do in your job?

2. Where do you work with pupils?

3. When do you work with pupils?

4. Do you get the needed help and assistance from the reading/math teachers?

5. What recommendations would you make for the program in general and your job specifically?

E. Principals

1. How satisfied are you with the reading/math program in your school?

2. How does the cooperation between the teachers and the Title I staff seem to be?

3. How active is the PAC?

4. What recommendations would you make for the program?

Discussion of Section A

Cluster Teacher

1. How did you select the children for your program?

In all cases, the children that were selected came from those who scored in the 0-3 stanine on the MAT.

2. When more children were eligible than there were staff available, how did you select those to participate?

In most cases, children were selected at this point by recommendations from the classroom teachers. When children scored in the 0-3 stanine in both math and reading, classroom teachers played a large role in determining which area the child needed the most work.

In some cases, however, decisions were made by the Title I staff to service all children who were eligible in reading first and then to pick up the children who need math service. Another variation was to not service children in a particular grade, thus being able to provide services to all children in certain other grades.

In some schools, some children who have previously received services and are now in the fourth stanine are also receiving reading and math services. Both the Correctives and the teachers seem to like this procedure very much and feel that these children are receiving the additional support which will allow them to continue on their own.

3. When do you meet your own pupils for instructional purposes?

The responses to this question varied greatly. The most salient aspect to the response of this question,

however, was that all Cluster Teachers are indeed working with children.

4. Approximately how many students do you service instructionally?

The responses to this question also varied. For those Cluster Teachers who were working with children in the classroom, they were generally seeing 25 students. For those Cluster Teachers working in "lab" settings, they were instructing approximately 32 students.

5. What percent of the children in your program fall in each stanine?

Most of the children were in the 2nd and 3rd stanine. This did, of course, vary by school. Only three or four schools, however, had large numbers of students who fell in the first stanine.

6. How many children are receiving both reading and math services?

According to the guidelines in the Title I proposal, no child is to receive both reading and math services. There were indeed some schools where children were receiving services in both areas. (In one school this was as high as 25-30% of the students.) Most schools, however, did not fall in this category.

7. How effective do you feel you have been in your job?

Most of the Cluster Teachers felt very positive about the work that they had been doing and the effectiveness of the program. A few, however, were very dissatisfied. This dissatisfaction occurred primarily as a result of poor pupil progress.

8. How cooperative are the regular classroom teachers?

In most schools, the Cluster Teachers felt that they had excellent cooperation from most of the teachers. In a few schools, the strike still had an unhealthy effect on cooperation.

9. What has handicapped your effectiveness?

One recurrent response was that having to combine teaching duties and organizational duties had handicapped effectiveness in both areas, however not greatly. Most Cluster Teachers said that they enjoyed the teaching aspect of their job, and felt that this should be continued. There were occasional problems which occurred as a result of this combination of duties, however, the problems that were most frequently mentioned were administrative in nature. One reason that minimal problems occurred is that most of the Cluster Teachers as well as the Corrective Teachers are not new to the program. Another critical factor is that most of the aides are also well seasoned and consequently, can do their job with minimal instruction.

10. After pupils are selected, what diagnostic procedures do you use to determine the instructional program?

This varies from school to school, but all use some form of diagnostic test to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the students. The results of these diagnostic tests form the core of the instructional program.

11. Who administers these diagnostic tests?

In the majority of the schools, the Corrective Teachers administer the diagnostic tests. In a few schools, however,

the Cluster Teacher tests all youngsters, and in one school the principal was also active in the testing program.

12. Are children receiving a regular development program in reading and math in addition to the Title I services?

This question was asked because an integral part of the Title I program is that these services be supplemental. In addition to asking this question of Cluster Teachers, Correctives and children were also asked. In the case of the children, the question was simply "What kinds of things do you do in your regular reading/math group in your classroom?" or "When do you have reading/math in your own classroom?" The responses to this question indicate that in all cases, the students are receiving a developmental reading and math program. This question was not designed, however, to ascertain the quality of the regular developmental program, but rather to establish its existence. Consequently, even though I heard of some outstanding developmental programs and some very poor ones, this is not dealt with in this paper.

13. What activities do you provide in the non-teaching side of your job?

Cluster Teachers are involved in scheduling, monitoring the implementation of the program in their building, ordering supplies, providing demonstrations when necessary and generally acting as a liaison between the Title I staff and the regular school program.

14. What assistance do you receive from the supervisors?

In general, the elementary supervisors were spoken of quite highly, although it appeared that they performed most of their services on request. The supervisors provided materials, observed classrooms and demonstrated lessons when asked.

There was no evidence of any special programs developed by the supervisors in those schools that received the lowest MAT scores. The Cluster Teachers at least were unable to articulate a specific program if one was in practice.

15. In what ways does the Generalist contribute to your program?

Most of the schools visited had the services of a Generalist only part time. This, of course, posed the problem of program continuity. Most, however, managed to meet with students on an individual basis as well as in structured group settings. When the Generalist is in a school only one day a week, it is difficult to provide services other than of a crisis nature. The principals in all cases said that the services of the Generalist were essential -- including that they only wished that the services were available full time. The Cluster Teachers on the other hand, though frequently praising the services of the Generalist, frequently did not know exactly what the Generalist was doing, particularly in relationship to the program. This suggests, of course, that the Cluster Teachers need to familiarize themselves more with the

responsibilities of the Generalist, and that the Generalist needs to work in closer coordination with the Cluster Teachers.

16. How active has the PAC been in your school? What efforts have been made to include parents?

In most schools, the PAC cannot be said to be very active. Principals and Cluster Teachers cite the many things they had done to encourage parents to attend PAC meetings. These, of course, include invitations to meetings and in some cases telephoning. None have been particularly successful. Some have blamed this lack of success on the Community Aides. Others have tried to look at what additional types of efforts they could make to encourage parents to be more active in the school. This problem, of course, is extremely complex and simple solutions are not likely to work. In order to begin attempts at the solution it is necessary to start by asking why parents don't become involved. Is it because parents are so satisfied with the program the way it is presently organized that they have completely delegated their authority and feel no need to provide input, or is it because parents feel that they are unable to make meaningful input, or is it because the school does not allow meaningful input? Whatever the reason or combination of reasons, parents need to know how their involvement affects the academic achievement of their child. They need to know that the school needs the input that they can provide, and that this input is not superfluous but a needed ingredient to sound education planning and decision making.

17. Are parents active in your reading and math program?

This question was asked because there seems to be a difference between being active in an organized body like the PAC and coming to school about your child's program. There was indeed a great deal more activity in terms of the reading and math program than there was PAC involvement. Parents were coming to workshops to learn more about what was going on in the classroom and to learn of activities that they could do to help their children.

This leads to a conclusion that parent involvement probably needs to be more broadly defined to include participation in activities such as this.

18. Do you feel that you have enough supplies and materials?

The amount of materials varies from school to school. Those schools which have had federal programs for some time have quite a few materials. The newer the program, however, the fewer the materials. All schools, however, were quite low on supplies.

19. What recommendations do you have for the program in general and for your role specifically?

1. Better selection procedure for children. Each year, some students receive higher stanine scores than actually reflects their ability, and conversely, some students receive low scores and yet are able to perform at a much higher level. Both Classroom Teachers, Corrective Teachers and Cluster Teachers would like more flexibility in bringing in and selecting out particular students.

2. Cluster Teachers should have specific background as reading specialists or math specialists. Those Cluster

Teachers who have only classroom experience are less effective than those who have had specific training in either reading or math.

3. The personnel at a particular building should remain as much in contact as possible. There are many extremely effective teacher-aide teams and to break these teams up affects the instructional program of a building.

4. An easier way of maintaining pupil records needs to be developed. In most cases, teachers have developed procedures which are easy for them and yet most of the same information that would be kept in the folder is still available. Most people are not using the folders in the manner in which they were intended. Most fill them out when they have spare time rather than daily or weekly. In fact, one teacher said she was "caught up to the storm" when I visited her school in May. Another teacher said that she would prefer having all of the students listed on one sheet. In that way it would be easier to see where individual children were in comparison to the rest of the group and easier to make decisions on grouping and re-teaching specific skills. In any event, the folders are not being used in the manner intended, but most of the teachers have a good handle on where each child is in the program and what additional work he/she needs. Also, no one seems to use the information on the folders. At best, they seem to be used by evaluators or occasionally parents who visit the schools.

General Observations

Most of the Cluster Teachers seem to be doing a good job in spite of having to coordinate the program and teach. Those schools who had the strongest programs had very strong Cluster Teachers. The Cluster Teacher role is one which is extremely important and if it is to be effectively carried out, the person must be a strong instructional leader. It is probably better not to select a Cluster Teacher from the regular teaching staff of a building because not all people are able to shift roles from teacher to leader. It is also very important that the Cluster Teacher try to develop and maintain excellent working relationships with the staff. Those schools which had the weakest programs also had the weakest personal relationships.

Cluster Teachers should also be selected because they have expertise in an area, i.e., reading or math. To be an instructional leader, your staff must value your expertise.

Since the Cluster Teacher is one of the most vital aspects of the Title I programs, it is essential that this role be maintained and no additional teaching loads be incurred.

Discussion of Section B

Reading and Math Corrective Teachers

1. Where is your instructional program implemented?

The program is carried out in different ways in different schools. In some schools, most of the instruction takes place in the classroom. In other schools most of the instruction takes place in "lab" type settings.

And, still other schools have a combination of both procedures. The best thing about this flexible procedure is that it allows the school to utilize the program that best fits their needs.

2. How long is your average reading group?

The time spent with each reading group ranged from 30 to 45 minutes per day.

3. How frequently do you meet with your pupils per week?

In all of the schools visited, the Correctives were meeting with pupils five times a week as required by the guidelines.

4. Of this time, approximately how much is spent in reading/math skills development? How much time is spent in actual oral reading or problem solving?

The proposal guidelines this year specify that at least ten minutes per day be spent in actual reading. I found that this amount of time varied greatly from school to school. Some described their program as spending about 20 percent of the time during the week on oral/silent reading. Others said that they did not always "get it in." What is clear, however, is that more time is actually being spent in reading activities as opposed to simply drill work -- although probably not as much effort as is needed in this area is being made. One reason for this is that it is much easier to teach skills and a great deal more difficult to teach utilization of these skills.

5. Approximately how long do you have each day for planning?

The amount of time varied from school to school. Most had at least 30 minutes but sometimes this was not

in a 30 minute block of time. Most of the teachers expressed the desire to have a four day instructional week similar to the program two years ago, where on Friday they were able to meet with teachers and to do their plans for the week.

6. How many students are in your average group?

This varied from school to school and class to class. The number ranged from 3-12.

7. How many students do you see during the day?

All teachers were meeting the number of students specified by the proposal guidelines -- 50 when instruction was carried on in the classroom and 75 when instruction was in the "lab."

8. How frequently do you meet with classroom teachers to confer on student progress?

Most of the teachers had regularly scheduled meetings each week to confer with classroom teachers. A few had biweekly meetings. Teachers also had additional conferences whenever the need arose.

9. What assistance does the Cluster Teacher provide?

The Cluster Teachers were seen as very helpful by most of the Corrective teachers. The Cluster Teachers were reported to have helped the teachers with instructional problems, securing of material, program information and occasionally specific children.

10. How helpful and knowledgeable are the aides?

Without exception the aides were described as extremely helpful and very knowledgeable. This can be

attributed to the fact that many aides have been in the program for a long time and consequently, they know the program, and they know the materials and skills to be taught. Additionally, many of the same teachers and aides have been working together as a team and consequently, instructional productivity between the two is high.

11. What types of inservices have you had? How helpful have they been?

The inservices done by the Cluster Teacher have varied from school to school. In some schools, the inservices are primarily devoted to program description and clarification. In other schools, inservices are more instructional in nature. These inservices have been characterized as somewhat helpful.

The inservices by the math supervisors have been described as excellent. An outstanding aspect of the program is that the aides have been included. Both Correctives and aides were very supportive of this procedure.

There had been one reading inservice prior to my visits in May, and the Corrective Reading Teachers said that they wish that they could have inservices similar to those designed for the math personnel.

12. What services do the supervisors provide?

The supervisors were seen to provide services primarily upon request. They make classroom observations, help secure materials and do classroom demonstrations.

13. Do you have adequate supplies and materials?

As stated in the Discussion of Section A, this varied from school to school. Some schools have adequate materials and lack sufficient supplies; others lack both.

14. What recommendations would you make for the program in general and for your job specifically?

No additional recommendations other than those described in Section A were made.

General Observations

In many schools I observed some excellent teaching. The Corrective Teachers seem to be doing a very good job. One area that could probably be improved, however, is less concentration on individual skills and more concentration on actual reading.

Discussion of Section C

Generalist

1. Describe what you feel to be the major aspects of your job.

Most Generalists view their job basically as that of a counselor with a combination of individual consultation and group work. Many were working with a total grade level; others were working with a single classroom. All were providing individual services such as referrals and testing children.

2. How many children do you see and in what manner?

This was a difficult question to have answered. The number varied from school to school and from time to time. The number that remains most constant is the total group that a Generalist works with.

This question is even more difficult to answer when the Generalist is part time at a particular school. In this case, the Generalist can only seem to manage crisis cases and on-going programs not only difficult to establish but also difficult to maintain once they have been initiated.

3. How effective do you feel you have been in your job?

Most of the Generalists feel only somewhat effective in their jobs. I think that this is primarily the nature of the job. Problems that require the services of the Generalist are not quickly solved.

4. What recommendations would you make for the program?

Almost all of the Generalists expressed how difficult it was to see children who needed help and be unable to work with them because of program restrictions. Most felt that they would like more flexibility in this area. One expressed the concern that the children in the entire school needed more image building and that it would be easier to work in the context of a total classroom or grade rather than simply with Title I children.

General Observations

Most of the Generalists seemed to be working very diligently. Communications between the Generalists and the other Title I staff could be improved, however. Many Title I personnel do not seem to know how the Generalist directly affects the rest of the program. It would also be helpful if part of the Generalist's time could come from PSEN funds which would allow him/her to work with any child in the school.

In most of the schools, the work of the Generalist was highly praised and valued.

Discussion of Section D

Aides

1. What exactly do you do in your job?

   For the most part, the aides were greatly instrumental in helping to individualize the program. I observed them working with individual children and with small groups of children. All were involved in reinforcement type activities. Some also assisted in maintaining folders, and in making teacher-made materials.

2. Where do you work with pupils?

   This varied from school to school depending upon whether the instructional program was in the classroom or the "lab."

3. When do you work with pupils?

   The aides were working with pupils the same time as the Corrective. This apparently is a very helpful procedure. It facilitates individualization and it does not disrupt the regular classroom program.

4. Do you get the needed help and assistance from the reading/math teachers?

   The aides felt very positive about the Correctives with whom they worked. All felt that they received the assistance that they needed.

5. What recommendations would you make for the program in general and your job specifically?

   No additional recommendations were made other than those already stated in Section A.

Discussion of Section E

Principals

1. How satisfied are you with the reading/math program in your school?

   Most of the principals are very satisfied with the program in their building. Some have a better understanding of what goes on in their program than others, however. Some are also actively involved in implementing the program. In those schools the program is very strong and most effective.

2. How does the cooperation between the teachers and the Title I staff seem to be?

   The principals generally seem to feel that the cooperation is good between the Title I staff and the regular classroom teachers. This opinion was also supported by the Cluster Teachers and the Corrective Teachers.

3. How active is the PAC?

   The PAC's for the most part are not very active. Most of the principals acknowledge this.

4. What recommendations would you make for the program?

   No additional recommendations other than those discussed in Section A were made.

Summary and Conclusions

In all aspects of the program, the guidelines were generally being implemented. In some cases, excellent teaching was observed, and outstanding instructional programs were being implemented. In very few cases, personalities greatly restricted the effectiveness of the program.

The program could be strengthened if the Elementary Supervisors took a more active part in the instructional and supervisory aspect of Title I programs.

Additionally, it appears quite clear that there are two ingredients which determine whether the program is highly successful or simply mediocre and they are the Cluster Teacher and the Building Administrator. The best programs had strong Cluster Teachers working in close coordination with the building principals. Together they provided good supervision of all aspects of the program and developed long-range plans for effective instructional planning.

In general, the program is functioning much more smoothly and effectively than in the past. For the most part, the total staff is quite good and appears to be relatively effective. (For specific recommendations, see each section.) The program could not in any way be decreased and still maintain the level of its present effectiveness.

Elementary Schools Visited

Schools	Date
31	5-30 a.m.
57	5-30 a.m.
18	6-8 a.m.
76	5-30 p.m.
BUILD	6-1 p.m.
6	6-13 p.m.
59	6-2 p.m.
82	6-10 a.m.
48	6-8 a.m.
62	6-8 a.m.
36	6-9 p.m.
St. Bartholomew	6-1 a.m.
Transfiguration	6-1 a.m.
St. Stanislaus	6-2 a.m.
Diocean Educational Center	6-2 a.m.
Holy Cross	6-3 a.m.
Immaculate Heart	6-3 p.m.